

HEAD TIMER

22 May 2017

This year, the RSL has adopted the option to use computer seeding. Teams must mutually agree to use computer seeding, in writing (e-mail concurrence is acceptable), at least five days before the meet. If computer seeding is used for a meet, swimmers will not be coming to the blocks with cards for their individual events. The timers will be provided with printed lane timer sheets that they will use to confirm the swimmer's name and to record the times.

Introduction:

- Timing is one of the most important functions required at a swim meet
- Timing allows parents the best seat in the house
- Be accurate – Their time is the measure of each athlete's accomplishment. The times will also decide who wins and who loses the meet.

Before the Season:

- Review the RSL rules
- (Team president or RSL Rep should have a copy for you; they are also posted on the RSL website)
- Check to ensure your team has enough watches
- Total number of watches required:
 - 8 lane pool = 16 watches
 - 6 lane pool = 13 watches
 - 5 lane pool = 11 watches
 - 4 lane pool = 10 watches
- Visiting Team is responsible to provide their timers watches.
- Check to ensure all watches are clearly marked with team's initials and number (ex: PV-7)
- Check to ensure all watches measure in the hundredths of seconds and that they are operational.
- Create a matrix so that you can easily make timing assignments

Lane 1	Lane 2	Lane 3	Lane 4	Lane 5	Lane 6	Lane 7	Lane 8
Home	Visitors	Home	Visitors	Home	Visitors	Home	Visitors
1 st Shift							
1(H)							
2(V)	2(H)	2(V)	2(H)	2(V)	2(H)	2(V)	2(H)
3(V)							
2 nd Shift							
1(H)							
2(V)	2(H)	2(V)	2(H)	2(V)	2(H)	2(V)	2(H)
3(V)							

Home team ODD Lanes - Visitors EVEN Lanes - 3 Timers Per Lane

Before the Meet:

- Line-up timers for the meet - Complete Matrix
- 2 Shifts are preferable - In a 6 lane pool that is 18 timers a meet per team. In an 8 lane pool that is 24 timers per team.
- **More experienced timers should be in the center lanes**
- Usually parents of younger children prefer 1st shift

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- Arrive at the meet early (Approximately 45 minutes before the meet)
- Confirm & check off your Timers as they arrive
- Meet with visiting team's head timer and complete matrix with visiting timers' names
- Assemble all timers (1st and 2nd shift) about 20 minutes before the meet for a Timer's Meeting.

Brief everyone on the following:

1. Lane Assignments - for both shifts.
2. Review any pool unique items (e.g. not using Lane 5 because the starting block is broken).
3. What type of starting system is being used (Whistle or Strobe Light).
4. Review the operation of the Stop Watch with all timers.
5. All starts should be on the FLASH - not the sound, when a Strobe is used.
6. Remind the timers to immediately check their watch to confirm they got a good start. If not, they should raise their hand with the watch in it over their head to get your attention.
7. Where to stand so they have a clear view for the finish.
8. Remind them that watches are STOPPED at the first touch of any part of the body on the wall
 - Whether it is a Legal or Illegal finish.
9. If a swimmer has been disqualified by a judge all times must still be recorded.
10. Remind timers of the following, these helpful hints make it easier on the people in the data room.
 - Please record ALL times to the hundredths place. Please write 23 seconds as 23.00 not just 23. Remember to write large enough, dark enough, and clear enough for the times to be seen even under bad lighting. Ones can look like sevens if numbers are not written clearly.
 - If you believe your time is incorrect, please just write "NT". On the other hand, if you think you did it correctly, but it is off from the other 2 timers, just write it down (this is why we use the middle time).
 - Please leave enough space around each time on the card to circle the time without obscuring the other times on the card.
 - If there are stopwatches that record thousandths, discard the extra digit; do not round.
11. Issue 1st shift their watches, and have them verify operation.
12. Identify the individual for each lane that will record times and issue a clipboard and pencil.
Instruct the individual to record the three watch times in the same order every race. If a time is missed, don't make it up; record "No Time" or "N/T".
13. Have the starter do a practice start and stop with starting system - compare times.
14. Inform them when the shift change will occur - Usually the change is between Event 36 and 37.

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During the Meet:

- Stand where the Referee can clearly see you and you can see all timers.
- Usually that is on the opposite side of the pool from the Referee and at the same end of the pool as the timers. Do not stand behind the timers before or during the start.
- You should be able to tell that all Timers are ready.
- Ensure you and the Referee are on the same page about how you will signal if the Timers are ready/not ready. Once the Referee blows the whistle signaling that the pool is clear and ready for the start, the Starter has control of the start and should not be impeded.
- Be alert for Stroke & Turn Judges or Coaches blocking the Timers' view of the starting device.
- Start two watches at the Flash and check to see you got a good start on both watches.
- Visually check your timers to ensure all lanes got a good start and look for signals that someone may need a watch.
- Head timers should keep their watches running until all swimmers have completed the heat.
- Check on your timers to make sure everything is going all right. Occasionally and randomly review recorded times to check accuracy of lane timing.
- If a lane appears to be socializing more than timing, speak to them immediately.
- If you suspect a timer is not positioning themselves properly for the finish, remind them they have to move up to the edge of the pool so they can clearly see the touch.
- **Remind your timers to verify the name of each swimmer with the name on the swimmer's card.** It is recommended that you ask "what is your name" vice "is your name 'Johnny'", as younger kids may not be paying attention, may misunderstand you, or may just simply shake their heads in agreement with the "all-knowing" adult. If they do not match, signal for a meet official immediately. It is also helpful to keep the child with you until the meet official can get to you.
- Give your timers fair warning when they need to change ends of the pool. Have them record the lane time and turn over the card to a runner before changing ends.
- Have the announcer remind 2nd shift timers around event 34 that shift change will occur at the end of event 36.
- Help the Referee keep the meet moving by ensuring that your timers are accurate, verifying names, clearing swimmers out of the pool, and getting times recorded.
- Ensure your timers are keeping up with the pace being set by the referee and starter. If they are having trouble, and you feel it necessary, then address the issue with the Referee. Remember though, "Everyone wants the meet to move along smoothly and quickly." Use your judgment – don't ask for the meet to slow down unless you absolutely feel it necessary, and then respect the position of the referee – he/she is ultimately in charge.

After the Meet:

- Gather all watches and clipboards for your team and verify you only have your team's watches.
- Make sure watches aren't running to conserve battery life and store appropriately.

Other Topics:

- Head Timer's Break
- Children's Heads and Backstroke: Safety or Interference
- Timers who want to be Stroke & Turn Judges

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- Communicating & Recording Times
- Watch Technique

All certified Head Timers will be listed on the “List of Trained Officials” spreadsheet. If a person is not listed at the time of the meet – then the official is not certified to officiate. Additions, deletions, or modifications to this list should be addressed with the RSL Officials Committee Chair.

RSL Rules Section 10.9 defines the rules and responsibilities pertaining to the Head Timer.

RSL Rules Section 10.10 defines the rules and responsibilities pertaining to the Lane Timers.

Given any discrepancy between the RSL Rules and this document, the RSL Rules shall take precedence.

The RSL Rules are available on the RSL’s official website, www.RSLSwimming.com. Click the “Read More” button under Resources, then the “Read More” button under Training, then select “RSL Rules.” This training document is also available under “RSL Head Timer.”

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